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A

DISSERTATION

ON

H O R S E S:

Wherein it is demonstrated, by Matters of Fact, as well as from the Principles of Philosophy, that INNATE QUALITIES do not exist, and that the excellence of this Animal is altogether mechanical and not in the Blood.

By WILLIAM OSMER.



L O N D O N:

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A
DISSERTATION
ON
HORSES.

WHOEVER supposes that Mess.
Heber and Pond, or even
Mr. John Cheney, were the
first who published accounts of Horse-
racing, will find himself much mis-
taken, for there lived others above a
hundred years before them, who not
only published accounts of Horse-
racing, but acquainted us with the
history of the wrestling, backsword-
playing, boxing, and even foot-racing,
B that

that happened in their days ; and from them we learn also who were the victors, and how the racers came in.

AMONGST these, lived a man whose name was Homer, a blind or obscure man (for they are synonymous terms) who occasionally published his book of sports, and to him we are obliged also for the pedigree of many Horses that were esteemed the best in his time. This man was said to be poor, in little esteem, and to travel about the country to sell his books ; but though his circumstances were very low, his understanding, it seems, was not, for he always took care to pay his court to the great personages wherever he came, and to flatter them in the blood of their Horses. But though he was little esteemed in his life-time, yet his book of pedigrees and genealogy of Horses was thought so

so useful, that he was greatly honoured for it after his death. And what is more strange, though the place of his nativity was unknown, and no country would receive him as a member of their community when living, yet when dead, many nations contended for the honour of it ; but whatever arguments each country may produce for the support of its claim, nothing is more evident than that he was an Englishman ; and there is great reason to believe he was born somewhere in the North, though I do not take upon me to say it absolutely was so. His partiality however, to that part of the kingdom, is manifest enough, for he pretended to say, that a good racer could be bred in no place but the North ; whereas, late experience has proved that to be a very idle notion. But as the northern gentlemen were the first breeders of racing

Horses; so it is very probable they were also the first subscribers to his book, and then we shall find his partiality might arise, either from his gratitude to these gentlemen, or from its being the place of his nativity, or perhaps from both.

T H E R E was in the North in his time, a very famous Stallion called Boreas : Whether the present breeders have any of that blood left, I do not certainly know ; but Homer, to flatter the owner, who was a subscriber to his book, and always gave him two half guineas instead of one, fabled that this same Boreas begot his colts as fleet as the wind. This to be sure will be looked upon as nothing more than a matter of polite partiality to his benefactor : But it is much to be feared, this partiality has not been confined to persons alone ; for there is
reason

reason to believe, that in many cases, he has varied the true pedigree of his Horses, and (not unlike our modern breeders) has left out one cross that has been thought not good, and substituted another in its room held more fashionable.

WE have an account in one of his books, (I forgot the year when it was published) of a very famous chariot-race, that was run over Newmarket between five noblemen ; and though it was the custom at that time to run with a two-wheeled chaise and pair only, instead of four, we find all other customs nearly the same. The names of the Horses are given us, their pedigrees, and the names of the drivers ; the course is marked out, judges appointed, betts offered, but no crossing or jostling allowed ; a plain proof they depended on winning from the excellence

lence of their Horses alone. But though a curricule and pair was then the fashion, there lived at that time a strange mad kind of fellow, haughty and overbearing, determined that nobody should do any thing like himself, who always drove three ; and though the recital of this circumstance may be considered as trivial, or little to the purpose, we shall find something in the story worth our attention, and with respect to Horses, a case very singular, such a one as no history, no tradition, nor our own experience has ever furnished us with a similar instance of.

IT seems these three Horses were so good that no Horses in the kingdom would match them. Homer, after having been very lavish in their praise, has given us their names, and the pedigree of two of them, which

it seems were full brothers. He tells us, they were as swift as the wind, and in his bombast way of writing, says they were immortal ; which expression is exactly of the same style and meaning with our modern phrase high-bred, and could mean nothing else, because in the recital of the pedigree, he tells us, they were got by this same North-country Horse before mentioned, called Boreas, and out of a flying Mare called Podarge. But the singularity of this case is, that the third Horse, whom he calls Pedafus, was absolutely a common Horse, and of no blood. Here I beg leave to make use of Mr. Pope's words, who, in his translation, speaking of this Horse, says thus :

“ Who like in strength, in swiftness, and in grace,
 “ A mortal courser match'd th' immortal race.”

N o w

Now as nothing is more certain, than that no Horses but those of blood can race in our days, I have long been endeavouring to find the true reason of this singular instance, and cannot any way account for it, but by supposing this equality of strength and elegance might produce an equality of swiftness. This consideration naturally produced another, which is, that the blood of all Horses may be merely ideal; and if so, a word of no meaning. But before I advance any thing more on this hypothesis, and that I may not be guilty of treason against the received laws of jockeyship, I do here lay it down as a certain truth, that no Horses but such as come from foreign countries, or which are of extraction totally foreign, can race. In this opinion every man will readily join me, and this opinion will

will be confirmed by every man's experience and observation.

BUT in discussing this point, I shall beg leave, when speaking of these Horses, to change the word HIGH-BRED, and in its room substitute the word foreigner, or of foreign extraction. For perhaps it may appear, that the excellence we find in these Horses depends totally on the mechanism of their parts, and not in their blood; and that all the particular distinctions and fashions thereof, depend also on the whim and caprice of mankind.

IF we take a Horse bred for the cart, and such a one as we call a hunter, and a Horse of foreign extraction, and set them together, the meanest judge will easily point out the best racer, from the texture, elegance,

and symmetry of their parts, without making any appeal to blood. Allow but a difference in the texture, elegance, and symmetry of parts in different Horses, whose extraction is foreign, this principle will be clearly proved, and the word HIGH-BRED of no use, but to puzzle and lead us astray: and every man's daily observation would teach him, if he was not lost in this imaginary error of particular blood, that, generally speaking, such Horses who have the finest texture, elegance of shape, and most proportion, are the best racers, let their blood be of what kind it will, always supposing it to be totally foreign.

If I was asked what beauty was, I should say proportion: if I was asked what strength was, I should say proportion also: but I would not be understood to mean, that this strength and beauty alone will constitute a racer,

racer, for we shall find a proper length
also will be wanted for the sake of
velocity ; and that moreover the very
constituent parts of foreign Horses
 differ as much from all others, as
 their performances. But this, how-
 ever, will be found a truth ; that in
all Horses of every kind, whether de-
signed to draw or ride, this principle
of proportion will determine the prin-
ciple of goodness ; at least to that
part of it which we call bottom. On
 the other hand, our daily observation
 will shew us, that no weak, loose,
disproportioned Horse, let his blood
be what it will, ever yet was a prime
racer. If it be objected, that many
 a plain ugly Horse has been a good
 racer ; I answer that all goodness is
 comparative ; and that such Horses
 who have been winners of plates about

the country, may be improperly called good racers, when compared to some others : but I can even allow a very plain Horse to be a prime racer, without giving up the least part of this system : for instance if we suppose a Horse (with a large head and long ears, like the Godolphin Arabian) a low mean forehead, flat sided, and goose rumped, this, I guess, will be allowed a plain ugly Horse ; but yet if such a Horse be strong, and justly made in those parts which are immediately conducive to action ; if his shoulders incline well backwards, his legs and joints in proportion, his carcase strong and deep, his thighs well let down, we shall find he may be a very good racer, even when tried by the principles of mechanics, without appeal-

ing

ing to his blood for any part of his goodness. We are taught by this doctrine of mechanics, that the power applied to any body, must be adequate to the weight of that body, otherwise, such power will be deficient for the action we require; and there is no man but knows a cable or chord of three inches diameter is not equal in strength to a chord of four inches diameter. So that if it should be asked why a handsome coach Horse, with as much beauty, length, and proportion as a foreign Horse, will not act with the same velocity and perseverance, nothing will be more easily answered, without appealing to blood; because we shall find the powers of acting in a foreign Horse much more prevalent, and more equal to the weight of his body, than the powers of acting in a coach Horse: for
 whoever

whoever has been curious enough to examine the mechanism of different Horses by dissection, will find the tendon of the leg in a foreign Horse is much larger than in any other Horse, whose leg is of the same dimensions ; and as the external texture of a foreign Horse is much finer than of any other, so the foreign Horse must necessarily have the greatest strength and perseverance in acting, because the muscular power of two Horses (whose dimensions are the same) will be the greatest in that Horse, whose texture is the finest.

LET us next inquire what information we can gather from the science of Anatomy, concerning the laws of motion : it teaches us, that the force and power of a muscle consists in the
number

number of fibres of which it is composed; and that the velocity and motion of a muscle consists in the length and extent of its fibres. Let us compare this doctrine with the language of the jockey: he tells us, if a Horse has not length, he will be slow; and if made too slender, he will not be able to bring his weight through. Does not the observation of the jockey exactly correspond with this doctrine? If we now inquire into the motion of Horses, we shall find the bones are the levers of the body, and the tendons and muscles (which are one and the same thing) are the powers of acting applied to these levers. Now when we consider a half-bred Horse running one mile or more, with the same velocity as a Horse of foreign extraction, we do not impute that equality

lity of velocity to any innate quality in the half-bred Horfe, becaufe we can account for it by external caufes : that is by an equality of the length, and extent of his levers and tendons. And when we confider a half-bred Horfe running one mile, or more, with the fame velocity as the other, and then giving it up, what fhall we do ? fhall we fay the foreigner beats him by his blood, or by the force and power of his tendons ? or can we, without reproaching our own reafon and underftanding, impute that to be the effect of occult and hidden caufes in the one of thefe instances and not in the other ? both of which are demonftrated with certainty, and reduced to facts by the knowledge of anatomy and the principles of mechanics.

How

How many instances have we of different Horses beating each other alternately over different sorts of ground! how often do we see short, close, compact Horses beating others of a more lengthened shape, over high and hilly courses, as well as deep and slippery ground; in the latter of which, the blood is esteemed much better, and whose performances in general are much better!

AND how comes it to pass that Horses of a more lengthened shape, have a superiority over Horses of a shorter make, upon level and flat courses? Is this effected by the difference of their mechanical powers, or is it affected by the blood? if, by the latter, then this blood is not general,
but

but partial only, which no reasoning
 man will be absurd enough to allow.
 But I much fear our distinctions of
 good and bad blood are determined
 with much partiality; for every jockey
 has his particular favourite blood, of
 which he judges from events, success,
 or prejudice: else, how comes it to
 pass, that we see the different opini-
 ons and fashions of blood varying
 daily! nay, we see the very same blood
 undergoing the very same fate; this
 year rejected, the next in the highest
 esteem; or this year in high repute,
 the next held at nothing. How ma-
 ny changes has the blood of Childers
 undergone! once the best, then the
 worst, now good again! Where are
 the descendants of Bay Bolton, that
 once were the terror of their antago-
 nists!

nists! Did these prevail by the superiority of their blood, or because their power and their fabric was superior to the Horses of their time? If any one ask why Danby Cade was not as good a racer as any in the kingdom, the jockey could not impute this defect to his blood; but if it should be imputed to his want of proportion, surely it might be held for a true and satisfactory reason. How many revolutions of fame and credit, have all sportsmen observed in these HIGH-BRED families.

NUMBERLESS are the examples of this kind which might be quoted, but to account for this, one says, The blood is wore out for want of a proper cross; another tells us, That after having been long in this climate, the blood degenerates; but these reasons cannot be true, because, ~~as~~ we see the off-

D

spring

*Danby
Cade
Cade
+*

spring of all crosses, and of the most
antient families, occasionally trium-
phant over the sons of the very latest
comers, the error then will not be
found in the blood, or in the proper
crossing ; but the defect will be pro-
duced by the erroneous judgment of
mankind, in putting together the
male and female with improper shapes ;
and while we are lost and blinded by
an imaginary good, the laws of na-
ture stand revealed ; and we by pay-
ing a proper attention thereto, and
employing our judgment therein,
might wipe this ignis fatuus from the
mind, and fix the truth on a sure
foundation. Our observation shews
 us, that on the one hand, we may
 breed Horses of foreign extraction too
 delicate, and too flight for any la-
 bour ; and on the other hand, so
 coarse and clumsy, as to be fitter
 for the cart than the race. Shall we
 then

then wonder these cannot race, or shall we doubt that degrees of imperfection in the mechanism, will produce degrees of imperfection in racing! and when we find such deficient, shall we ridiculously impute it to a degeneracy of that blood, which once was in the highest esteem, or to the want of judgment in him who did not properly adapt the shapes of their progenitors!

SHALL we confess this, or is the fault in nature? For though most philosophers agréé, that innate principles do not exist, yet we know for certain, that in the brute creation, whose food is plain and simple, (unlike luxurious man) the laws of nature are, generally speaking, invariable and determined. If it should be asked why the sons of the Godolphin Arabian were superior to most

*Godolphin
Arabian*

Horfes of their time ; I answer, be-
cause he had a great power and fyme-
try of parts, (head excepted) and a
propriety of length greatly superior
to all other Horfes of the same dia-
meter, that have been lately seen in
this kingdom; which I do not assert
on my own judgment, but on the o-
pinion of those who, I believe, un-
derstand Horfes much better than I
pretend to do: and 'tis very probable,
this Horfe, if he had not been con-
fined to particular Mares, might have
begot better racers than any he did.
 On the contrary, I have heard it
urged in behalf of his blood, that he
was a very mean Horfe in figure, and
that he was kept as a teizer some
years before he covered. What does
this prove? I think nothing more,
than that his first owner did not right-
ly understand this kind of Horfe, and
 that

that different men differed in their opinions of this Horse's fabric.

IF any man who doubts this excellence to be in the blood, should ask how it came to pass that we often see two full brothers, one of which is a good racer, the other indifferent, or perhaps bad, I know of but two answers that can be given ; we must either allow this excellence of the blood to be partial, or else we must say, that by putting together a Horse and a Mare, different in their shapes, a foetus may be produced of a happy form at one time, and at another the foetus partaking more or less of the shape of either, may not be so happily formed. Which shall we do ? shall we impute this difference of goodness in the two brothers, to the difference of their mechanism ? or shall we say this perfection of the blood is partial ?

If

If the latter, then we must own that
blood is not to be relied on, but that
the system of it, and whatever is
built on that foundation, is precarious
and uncertain, and therefore falls to
the ground of its own accord. Whilst
 this continues to be the rule of breed-
 ing, I mean of putting male and fe-
 male together, with no consideration
 but that of blood and a proper cross,
 it is no wonder so few good racers are
 produced, no wonder mankind are
 disappointed in their pleasures and ex-
 pectations; for this prejudice does not
 only extend to blood, but even to the
 very names of the breeders, and the
 country where the Horses are bred,
 though it is beyond all doubt, that
 the North claims the preference of all
 other places in this kingdom; but
 that preference is allowed only from
 the multiplicity of Mares and Stal-
 lions

lions in those parts, and from the
number of racers there bred.

I would not be thought in this
to prefer my own opinion of shape
and make to the known goodness of
any Stallion, but would prefer the lat-
ter before the opinion of all mankind.
What then? It is not every Horse
that has been a good racer will get
good colts; some have suffered too
much in their constitution by hard
and continual labour, whilst others
have some natural infirmity that may
probably be entailed on their gene-
ration.

BUT the most material thing in
breeding all animals, and to which
we pay the least regard, either in the
race of men or Horses, is the choice
of the female, who not only joins in
the

X
 the production of the fœtus, but in
 the formation of it also. And that
 the female has even the greatest share
 in the production of the fœtus, will
 be proved by this instance: if you
 take a dunghill cock and put to a game
 hen, and also put a brother of that
 game hen to a sister of the dunghill
 cock, those chickens bred from the
 game hen will be found much supe-
 rior to those chickens bred from the
 dunghill hen.

AND here I beg leave to be allowed
 (without the imputation of pedantry)
 one quotation from Virgil, who is
 supposed to have well understood the
 laws of nature. In his description of
 the choice of animals for procreation,
 in the third chapter of his Georgic's,
 and the 49th verse, you will find it
 thus written:

“ Seu

“ Seu quis Olympiacæ miratus præmia palmæ,
 “ Pascit Equos, seu quis fortes ad aratra Juvencos,
 “ Corpora præcipuè matrum legat.”

BUT if I should not escape the censure of the critics on this occasion, I expect the thanks of all the handsome well-made women in the kingdom, for this hint, who understand Latin; and where they do not, I hope their paramours will instil the meaning of it, as deeply as they can into them. But to return to the breed of Horses.

WE pay little regard to the mechanism of the female, or of the Horse to which we put her, but generally choose some particular Horse for the sake of the cross, or because he is called an Arabian; whereas, in fact, every Stallion will not be suited to every

E

Mare,

Mare, but he who has a fine female,
and judgment enough to adapt her
shapes with propriety to a fine male,
will always breed the best racer, let
the sort of blood be what it will, al-
ways supposing it to be totally fo-
reign. The truth of this will be con-
 firmed by our observation, which shews
 us, that Horses do race, and do not
race, of all families and all crosses.

X WE find also, that affinity of blood
in the brute creation, if not continued
too long in the same channel, is no
impediment to the perfection of the
animal, for experience teaches us, it
will hold good many years in the
breed of game cocks. Besides, we
 know that Childers, which was per-
 haps the best racer ever bred in this
 kingdom, had in his veins a consan-
 guinity of blood; his pedigree in-
 forming

forming us, that his great grandam
was got by Spanker, the dam of which
Mare was also the dam of the said
Spanker.

I F we inquire a little farther into the different species of the creation, we shall find this principle concerning perfection of shape still more verified. Amongst game cocks we shall find, that wheresoever power and propriety of shape prevails most, that side (condition alike) will generally prevail. We shall find also, that one cock perfectly made, will beat two or three of his own brothers imperfectly made. If any man should boast of the blood of his cocks, and say that the uncommon virtue of this animal, which we call game, is innate, I answer no, for that all principles, and all ideas arise from sensation and reflection, and are therefore acquired.

X WE perceive this spirit of fighting in game chicken, which they exert occasionally from their infancy ; even so it is amongst dunghill chickens, though not carried to that degree of perseverance.

X WHEN arrived at maturity, we see these different birds will still continue to fight if they meet ; if I should be asked why the perseverance of fighting in one does not continue to death, as in the other, I answer, that from a different texture of the organs of the body, different sensations will arise, and consequently different effects be produced ; and this will be proved by instances from the best of those very cocks which are called game, who (it is well known) when they suffer a variation

riation in their texture, or as cockers term it, become rotten, run away themselves, and their descendants also; which sensation of fear could not be produced by any alteration in the body, if this principle of game was innate.

A M O N G S T men, do we not perceive agility and strength stand forth confessed in the fabric of their bodies? Do not even the passions and pleasures of mankind greatly depend on the organs of their bodies? A-mongst dogs, we shall find the fox-hound prevailing over all others in speed and in bottom; but if not in speed, in bottom at least I hope it will be allowed. To what shall we impute this perfection in him? Shall we impute it to his blood, or to that elegance of form in which
is

is found no unnecessary weight to oppress the muscles, or detract from his ability of perseverance? if to blood, from whence shall we deduce it? or from what origin is it derived? Surely no man means more, when he talks of the blood of fox-hounds, than to intimate that they are descended from such, whose ancestors have been eminent for their good qualifications, and have shone conspicuous in the front of the pack for many generations.

X B U T allowing this system of blood to exist in hounds and Horses, let us consider how inconsistently and differently we act with respect to each; with respect to hounds, if when arrived at maturity, we think them ill shaped and loosely made, we at once dispose of them without any trial,

trial, well knowing they will not answer our expectations: whereas, in Horses, let the shape be what it will, we are persuaded to train, because the jockey says they are very HIGH-BRED. If we now compare the blood of Horses with that of dogs, shall not we find the case to be similar? will not the origin be as uncertain in Horses as in dogs? It is true, in some foreign countries they have long pedigrees of their Horses as well as we, but what proofs have they themselves of this excellence of the blood in one Horse more than another of the same country? I never heard they made any trial of their Horses in the racing way, but if they did, their decision would be as uncertain as ours with respect to the blood, because their decision must be determined by events alone,

alone, and therefore, by no means a proper foundation whereon to build a system, or establish a fact, which can be accounted for by causes.

THE jockeys have an expression which, if this system be true, is the most senseless imaginable: I have heard it often said, Such a Horse has speed enough if his heart do but lie in the right place. In answer to this, let us consider a Horse as a piece of animated machinery (for it is in reality no other); let us set this piece of machinery going, and strain the works of it; if the works are are not analogous to each other, will not the weakest give way? and when that happens, will not the whole be out of tune? But if we suppose

a piece of machinery, whose works
bear a true proportion and analogy
to each other, these will bear a great-
er stress, will act with greater force,
more regularity and continuance of
time. If it be objected, that foreign
 Horses seldom race themselves, and
 therefore it must be in the blood,
 I think nothing more easily answered;
 for we seldom see any of these Horses
 sent us from abroad, especially from
 Arabia, but what are more or less
 disproportioned, crooked, and de-
 formed in some part or other; and
 when we see this deformity of shape,
 can we any longer wonder at their
 inability of racing: add to this, ma-
 ny of them are perhaps full-aged
 before they arrive in this kingdom;
 whereas, it is generally understood,
 that a proper training from his youth
 is necessary to form a good racer.

BUT be this as it will, let us consider how it happens, that these awkward, cross-shaped, disproportioned Horses, seemingly contrary to the laws of nature, beget Horses of much finer shapes than themselves, as we daily see produced in this Kingdom. And here I acknowledge myself to have been long at a loss how to account for this seeming difficulty.

I HAVE been often conversant with travelers, concerning the nature and breed of these Horses; few of whom could give any account of the matter, from having had no taste therein, or any delight in that animal: but, at length, I became acquainted with a gentleman of undoubted veracity; whose word may be relied on, whose taste and judgment in Horses is inferior to no man's.

HE

HE says, that having spent a considerable part of his life at Scanderoon and Aleppo, he frequently made excursions amongst the Arabs; excited by curiosity, as well as to gratify his pleasures. (The Arabs, here meant, are subjects of the grand seignior, and receive a stipend from that court, to keep the wild Arabs in awe, who are a fierce banditti, and live by plunder.) He says also, that these stipendiary Arabs are a very worthy set of people, exactly resembling another worthy set of people we have in England called Lawyers; for that they receive fees from both parties; and when they can do it with impunity, occasionally rob themselves. These Arabs encamp on the deserts together in large numbers, and with them moves all their household; that these people keep numbers of greyhounds, for the sake of

courſing the game and procuring their ſubſiſtance: and that he has often been with parties for the ſake of courſing amongſt thoſe people, and continued with them occaſionally for a conſiderable ſpace of time. That by them you are furniſhed with dogs and horſes; for the uſe of which you give them a reward. He ſays they live all together; men, horſes, dogs, colts, women, and children. That theſe colts, having no green herbage to feed upon when taken from the Mare, are brought up by hand, and live as the children do; and that the older Horſes have no other food, than ſtraw and chopped barley, which theſe Arabs procure from the villages moſt adjacent to their encampments. The colts, he ſays, run about with their dams on all expeditions, till weaned; for that it is the cuſtom of the Arabs

to

to ride their mares, as thinking them the fleetest, and not their horses; from whence we may infer, that the mare colts are best fed and taken care of. That if you ask one of these banditti to sell his mare, his answer is, that on her speed depends his own head. He says also, the stone colts are so little regarded, that it is difficult to find a Horse of any tolerable size and shape amongst them.

IF this then is the case, shall we be any longer at a loss to account for the deformity of an animal, who, from his infancy, is neglected, starved, and dried up, for want of juices? or shall we wonder that his offspring, produced in a land of plenty, of whom the greatest care is taken, who is defended from the extremity of heat and cold, whose food is never
 limited,

limited, and whose vessels are filled
with the juices of the sweetest herb-
age, shall we wonder, I say, that his
offspring, so brought up, should ac-
quire a more perfect shape and size
than his progenitor? or if the Sire is
not able to race, shall we wonder that
the Son, whose shape is more perfect,
should excel his Sire in all perform-
ances?

BUT there is another reason why
 many of the very finest of these fo-
 reign Horses cannot race: our observa-
 tion of them will shew us, that though
their shoulders in general exceedingly
incline backwards, yet their fore-legs
stand very much under them; but in
different Horses this position is more
or less observable. This, (when I
considered the laws of nature) ap-
peared to me the greatest imperfec-
 tion

tion a Stallion could possibly have :

but when this gentleman informed me it was the custom of the Turks always to keep each fore-leg of the Horse chained to the hinder one, of each side, when not in action, I no longer considered it as a natural, but an acquired imperfection. Shall we now wonder that such an one, though ever so well made in other respects, cannot race in spite of all his blood ?

But the custom of the Arabs in this respect, he says, his memory does not extend to. I well remember this to

be the case of the Godolphin Ara-

bian when I saw him, who stood
bent at knees, and with his fore-
legs trembling under him : such is

the case of Mosco's grey Horse in
some degree. In our country we

frequently see Horses stand pawing their litter under them with their
fore-

fore-feet ; our custom to prevent it
is to put hobbles on their fore-legs,
and this will produce the same posi-
tion in a greater or less degree,
though not so conspicuous as in some
of those foreign Horses, who have
been habituated from their youth to
this confined method of standing.
 His royal highness the duke of Cum-
 berland has a very remarkable in-
 stance of this, in a Horse called
 Muley Ishmael, which is otherwise,
 the most elegant Horse I ever yet
 beheld. Whether this position is na-
 tural or acquired, will be best de-
 termined by his produce. Suppose
 now this Horse should be tried,
 and found no racer, shall he be
 condemned as a Stallion, and the
 fault imputed to his blood ; or on
 the other hand, if his colts are
 strait upon their legs, and found to
 be

be good racers, shall the perfection
of such colt be imputed to the blood
of the father, when we can account
for speed in the one, and the want
of it in the other, from the different
attitude of each Horse? We are
further acquainted, that the Horses
we call Turks, are in reality Arabs;
that the true Turkish Horse, is a
large, heavy, majestic animal, of no
speed, designed to ride on for state
and grandeur; that it is the cus-
tom of the bashaws in Arabia oc-
casionaly to choose, from their pro-
vinces, such colts as they like, and
send them to the grand seignior's
stables, which they do at their own
price, and which the Arabs, who
breed them, look upon as a very
great hardship. These colts are a-
gain picked and culled, after hav-
ing been some time in the grand
G seignior's

feignior's stables, and the refuse disposed of at his pleasure, so that the fine Horses found in the possession of the Turks, are either some of these which are cast from the grand feignior's stables, or which the Turks buy from the Arabs whilst they are young. And he farther acquaints us with the reason why the Turks choose these Arabian Horses when young, because, if continued long in the hands of the Arabs, they are small, stunted, and deformed in shape; whereas, when brought into Turkey, a land of greater plenty than the deserts of Arabia, they acquire a greater perfection both of size and shape. Now, whether these Turks and Arabs are of the same or different extraction, may perhaps be very little to our purpose; but it is absurd to suppose that providence has bestowed

ed a virtue on a part only of this species produced in any one country, (which species was undoubtedly designed for the use of man) and that mankind should not be able, in any age, to determine with precision this virtue, or fix any criterion, whereby to judge with any certainty.

SEEING then, this is the case, how shall we account for the various perfection and imperfection in the breed of these foreign Horses; for we perceive it not determined to those of Turkey, Barbary, or Arabia, but from each of these countries, some good, some bad Stallions are sent us? What shall we do? Shall we continue to impute it to the good old phrase of blood, the particular virtue of which, no man ever

yet could ascertain, in any one particular instance, since Horses were first created? or shall we say that nature has given these foreign Horses a finer texture, a finer attitude, and more power than any other Horses we know of; and that these very Horses, and their descendants always did, and always will surpass each other in speed and bottom, according to their different degrees of power, shape, elegance, and proportion? But there is also a certain length determined to some particular parts of this animal, absolutely necessary to velocity, of the particularity and propriety of which length, all jockeys appear to be intirely ignorant, from the latitude of their expression, which is that a racer must have length some- where.

IF I might now be allowed to give my opinion of this propriety of length, I should say it consisted in the depth and declivity of the shoulders, and in the length of the quarters and thighs, and the insertion of the muscles thereof. The effect of the different position or attitude of the shoulders in all Horses, is very demonstrable: if we consider the motion of a shoulder, we shall find it limited to a certain degree by the ligamentous and tendinous parts, which confine it to its proper sphere of acting; so that if the shoulder stand upright, the Horse will not be able to put his toes far before him, but will acquire only such a particular degree of space at each step or movement; but if the shoulders have a declivity in them, he cannot only put his toes farther before him, but a greater

greater purchase of ground will be obtained at every stroke.

✕ THE certainty of this effect in the declivity of the shoulders will be known by every man's observation; and it is also easily demonstrated by the principles of mechanics, by which we learn, that if a weight is applied to a pulley, in order to shut a door, and that weight be allowed to fall immediately and perpendicularly from the door, it will not pull it too with that velocity as it will do if an angle be acquired, and the weight pass over a wheel removed to a very little distance from the door.

NEVERTHELESS, there is no general rule without exception, for we now and then find a Horse to be

a good racer, who has not this declivity in his shoulders, but from a length in his thighs and quarters has a sufficient share of speed. Add to this, there is another advantage obtained to the Horse besides velocity by this declivity of the shoulders, for his weight is removed farther back, and placed more in the center of his body, by which an equilibrium is acquired, and every muscle bears a more equal share of weight and action ; so that the nearer the articulation of the quarters approach to the superior part of the shoulders, so much the shorter will the back be, and as much more expanded as the chest is, so much stronger will the animal be, and will also have a larger space for the organs of respiration to exert themselves.

BUT

✕✕ BUT I would not be understood to mean, that the shortness of the back, or capacity of the chest, will constitute a racer ; far from it : but that in any given and proportioned length, from the bosom of the Horse to the setting on of the dock, the nearer the superior points of the shoulders approach to the quarters, so much better able will the carcase be to sustain and bring through the weight ; and as much as the shoulders themselves prevail in depth, and the quarters and thighs in length, so much greater will be the velocity of the Horse, because a greater purchase of ground is hereby obtained at every stroke.

✕ IT is by this propriety of length, strength of carcase, and the power of the muscles, that foreign Horses excel all others, and it is by the same advantages

tages they excel each other also, and not by any innate virtue, or principle of the mind, which must be understood by the word blood, if any thing at all is intended to be understood by it; and this is a truth every man would be convinced of, if he would divest himself of partiality to particular blood, and confide in his own observation of Horses and their performances.

SEDBURY was an instance of this great power, in whom we find all the muscles rising very luxuriant, and with a remarkable prominence. The famous Childers was a like instance of it. These two Horses were remarkably good, but we have been absurd enough to condemn the blood of both at various times; in one, because he had bad feet, and entailed that de-

H

fect

*Sodbury**+ 13**Childers*

fect on the generality of his offspring ;
in the other, because most people who
bred from that lineage, were running
mad after a proper cross, when they
should have been employed in think-
ing only of propriety of shape.

I AM very far from desiring to be
 thought a superior judge of this ani-
 mal, but I will be bold to say, that
according to these principles of length
and power, there never was a Horse
(at least that I have seen) so well en-
titled to get racers as the Godolphin
Arabian ; for whoever has seen this
Horse, must remember that his shoul-
ders were deeper, and lay farther into
his back, than any Horse's ever yet
seen ; behind the shoulders, there was
but a very small space ; before, the
muscles of his loins rose excessively
high, broad, and expanded, which
 were

were inserted into his quarters with greater strength and power than in any Horse I believe ever yet seen of his dimensions. If we now consider the plainness of his head and ears, the position of his fore-legs, and his stinted growth, occasioned by the want of food in the country where he was bred, it is not to be wondered at, that the excellence of this Horse's shape, which we see only in miniature, and therefore imperfectly, was not so manifest and apparent to the perception of some men as of others.

IT has been said, that the sons of the Godolphin Arabian had better wind than other Horses, and that this perfection of the wind was in the blood. But when we consider any Horse thus mechanically made, whose leavers acquire more

purchase, and whose powers are
 stronger than his adversaries, such
 a Horse will be enabled by this
 superiority of mechanism, to act
 with greater facility, and therefore
 it is no wonder that the organs
 of respiration (if not confined or
 straitened more than his adverfa-
 ries) should be less fatigued. Sup-
 pose now, we take ten mares of the
 same, or different blood, all which
 is held equally good, when the
 Mares are covered, and have been
 esteemed so long before, and put
 to this Godolphin Arabian, let us
 suppose some of the colts to be
 good racers, and others very in-
 ferior to them; shall we condemn
 the blood of these mares which
 produced the inferior Horses? If so,
 we shall never know what good
 blood is, or where it is to be found,

or

or ever act with any certainty in the propagation of this species, and it is this ridiculous opinion alone of blood, that deceives mankind so much in the breed of racers. If we ask the jockey the cause of this difference in the performance of these brothers, he (willing to account some how for it) readily answers, that the blood did not nick ; but will a wise and reasoning man, who seriously endeavours to account for this difference, be content with such a vague, unmeaning answer, when, by applying his attention to matters of fact, and his observation to the different mechanism of these brothers, the difference of their performance is not only rationally, but demonstratively accounted for?

BUT

+ BUT if this excellence of the racer should really be in the blood, or what is called the proper nicking of it, I must say, it is a matter of great wonder to me, that the blood of the Godolphin Arabian, who was a confined Stallion, and had but few Mares, should nick so well as to produce so many excellent racers; and that the blood of his son Cade, who has had such a number of Mares, and those, perhaps, the very best in the kingdom, should not nick any better than it seems to have done; for I do not conceive the performances of the sons of Cade to have been equal in any respect to the sons of the Godolphin Arabian; though I do not pretend to determine this myself, but shall leave it to the opinion of mankind.

THE question then is, whether this excellence of Horses is in the blood or the mechanifm ; whoever is for blood, let him take two brothers of any fort or kind, and breed one up in plenty, the other upon a barren heath ; I fancy he will find, that a different mechanifm of the body will be acquired to the two brothers by the difference of their living, and that the blood of him brought up on the barren heath, will not be able to contend with the mechanifm of the other, brought up in a land of plenty. Now if this difference of fhape will make a difference in the performance of the animal, it will be juft the fame thing in its confequences, whether this imperfection of fhape be produced by fcarcity of food, or entailed by the laws of nature ; if fo, does it fignify whether the colt be got by Turk, Barb,

Barb, or Arab, or what kind of blood his dam be of? or where shall we find one certain proof of the efficacy of blood in any Horse produced in any age or any country, independent of the laws of mechanics?

✕

IF it should be urged, that these foreign Horses get better colts than their descendants, that therefore the blood of foreign ones is best, I answer, no; for that according to the number of foreign Stallions we have had in this kingdom, there have been more reputed and really bad than good ones, which would not happen in the case of Horses, who come from the same country, and are of the same extraction, if this goodness was in the blood only. But the true reason why foreign Horses get better colts than their descendants, if they do get better,

ter, is that (mechanism alike) their descendants from which we breed, are generally such Horses as have been thoroughly tried, consequently much X 63
strained, and gone through strong la-
bour and fatigue ; whereas the fo-
reign Horse has perhaps seldom or
ever known what labour was ; for
we find the Turk a sober grave per-
son, always riding a foot pace, except
on emergencies, and the Arab prefer-
ing his Mare to his Horse for use and
service. As a proof of this truth, let
 us take two sister hound bitches, and
 ward them both with the same dog ;
 let us suppose one bitch to have run in
 the pack, and the other by some ac-
 cident not to have worked at all, it
 will be found that the offspring of
 her who has never worked, will be
 much superior to the offspring of her
 who has run in the pack.

ALL I have now to ask of my brother jockeys is, that for the future, when speaking of these Horses, they will, instead of the phrase HIGH-BRED, say only well-bred, and that they will not even then be understood to mean any thing more by it, than that they are descended from a race of Horses, whose actions have established their goodness: and that I may have leave to prefer my opinion of the mechanical powers of a Horse, to all their opinions concerning blood, which is in reality no more than a vain chimera. If these things are so, have not we and our forefathers been hoodwinked all our days by the prevalence of a ridiculous custom, and mistaken system, when by consulting our own reason and understanding, this mist
of

of error had fled before it? If this mechanical power was considered as it ought to be, it would excite a proper emulation amongst all breeders: and when the excellence in the breed of Horses was found to be the effect of judgment, and not of chance, there would be more merit as well as more pleasure in having bred a superior Horse. Add to this, mankind by applying their attention to this mechanism of animals, would improve their judgment in the laws of nature, and it would not only produce a much better breed of racers than any we have yet seen, but the good of it would extend to all sorts of Horses throughout the kingdom of what kind soever. It is a cruel thing to say, but yet a very true one, that amongst the present breed

X of Horſes in this nation, a man of any tolerable judgment can hardly find one in fifty fit for his purpoſe, whether deſigned to draw or ride; whereas if the purchaſers would endeavour to make themſelves maſters of this mechanifm, the breeders of every kind of Horſes muſt conſult it alſo, or keep their uſeleſs ones in their own hands, which I conceive would be a proper puniſhment for their ignorance.

AND now the author appeals not to the illiterate and unlearned (whoſe obſtinacy is too great to receive inſtruction, and whoſe prejudices are too ſtrong to be obliterated by any reaſons) but to the candid and impartial inquiry of reaſoning and unprejudiced men into theſe principles, and hopes this may be a means of exciting

citing some more able pen, to vindicate a truth so many ages buried in darknefs. If aught conducive to the pleasure or use of mankind shall accrue from these hints, he will think himself happy ; on the other hand, if the principles here advanced should prove erroneous, and any man be kind enough to point out the fallacy of them, he will kiss the rod with chearfulness and submission.

F I N I S.

